

SOUTHWEST CIVILIAN PERSONNEL OPERATIONS CENTER
Fort Riley, KS

SWCPOC Trailblazer

Summer

Issue 4-99

"Together Everyone Achieves More"

August 1999

FROM THE TRAIL BOSS

Army Benefits Center (ABC)

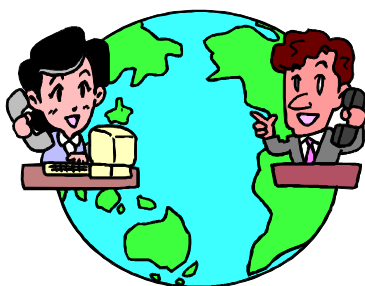


The Army's Benefits and Entitlements Call Center located at Ft Riley, KS now has an official name:

ARMY BENEFITS CENTER (ABC)

The building has been renovated, furniture is on order, equipment is being installed, and the staff is in training - all in preparation to begin service to Ft Riley civilian employees in late Oct 99.

Other employees in the Southwest Region will be able to access the **ABC** through the Internet with full service to begin mid-January 2000.



The **ABC** will provide up-to-date benefits and entitlements information using state-of-the-art technology. Employees can obtain information regarding:

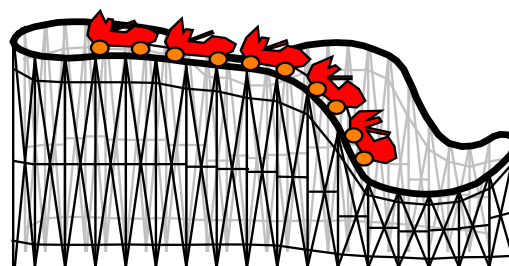
- Federal Employees' Health Benefits (FEHB)
- Federal Employees' Group Life Ins (FGLI)
- Thrift Savings Plan (TSP)

- Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS)
- Federal Employees' Retirement System (FERS)
- Survivor Benefits - death/dismemberment

Advantages of using the new centralized, automated system include:

- ◆ Transactions can be processed at the convenience of the employee
- ◆ Easy and convenient access - toll free number/Internet
- ◆ Expanded hours of operations
- ◆ Accurate/up-to-date information
- ◆ Trained counselors
- ◆ Employees can manage their benefits and entitlements
- ◆ Eliminates many of the manual processes

Stay tuned for a wild thrill ride!
Look for more information soon on
www.cpol.army.mil



**Exciting times
ahead with
ABC !**

CPOCMA Team Visits the ABC

A team from HQDA, CPOCMA, lead by Mr. Elmer (Smiley) Williams visited the Southwest Civilian Operations Center in June to discuss the establishment and stand-up of the Army Benefits Center.



Discussions covered technical details of equipment installation and testing, Internet functionality, interface with DCPDS, plans for staffing the Center, and training of ABC employees.

Hours of operations for the ABC were set. Employees will be able to access the Center 21 hours per day, seven days a week by telephone or the Internet. Counselors will be available from 0600 to 2000, (Central Time) Monday through Friday.



Official Visit by Deputy Assistant Secretary of Army

Mr. Dave Snyder arrived at the SWCPOC 14 July for a whirlwind visit. Mr. Snyder met with SWCPOC staff and toured the newly reconstructed building that will house the Army Benefits Center.

FORGING AHEAD WITH CLASS

A special thanks to the Fort Hood, DOL and SWD COE for electronically providing organizational PDs for inclusion into FASCLASS. This speeds up the inclusion of PDs into FASCLASS and saves us many valuable hours of scanning.

Together Everyone Achieves More

Thanks for the TEAM effort!

Classification Tools

DA has provided a number of automated classification tools to assist managers and supervisors in writing and describing new or revised position descriptions (PDs).

PD Library COREDOC FASCLASS



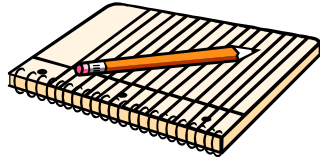
These tools are designed to eliminate the need to write and classify new position descriptions. Managers can quickly select a PD that accurately describes the organizational situation and represents major duties and responsibilities of the position.

In some instances, minor editorial changes will need to be made to properly describe the position. To avoid altering the classification intent, and to assist us in identifying any changes that you may have made, we have posted some simple steps on our web site: www.swcpoc.army.mil/Tools.

Things to Remember When Using Class Tools

Remember that unedited COREDOC, PD Library and FASCLASS position descriptions will be processed faster than edited ones.

Don't forget to let us know in the Remarks section of the PERSACTION when using a PD Library, COREDOC or FASCLASS position description. Always include the number currently assigned to the PD and annotate if it has been edited.



D Managers who use Delegated
C Classification Authority (DCA) to
A approve the content of PDs must be careful to ensure compliance with applicable law and classification standards.

Virtual Military Positions

The Modern Defense Civilian Personnel Data System (DCPDS) has a new requirement: Military positions must be built into the database if they supervise civilians.



Classification Div will build the military positions into a relational database with a hierarchy that includes an organizational and position structure.

The organization hierarchy structure is based on the unit identification code (UIC) chain of command from the Secretary of Defense down to the installation level Directorate, Division, Branch or Section.

We will be requesting specific data very soon. Stay tuned for more about this in the coming weeks.

LEARNING THE ROPES WITH HRDD

DLAMP Class Of 2000 Announced

What is DLAMP?

The Defense Leadership & Management Program (DLAMP) is a developmental program for those who want to compete for DLAMP leadership positions. The purpose of DLAMP is to establish a DoD-wide program for developing future civilian leaders.

The announcement for the DLAMP Class of 2000 is at <http://cpol.army.mil/train/fy2000/>.

Advance notice by e-mail was sent to all MACOM Civilian Personnel Directors, Functional Chief Representatives, and Proponents on 22 Jun 99. The email alerted the addressees to the HQDA deadline of 7 Sep 99.

(Reprinted from Pacific CPOC Nugget Newsletter June 99)

Do You Need the Training?



Do you ever have to make up your mind whether or not you need a training course to improve your performance?

If you think you need to take a training course, you should first talk to your supervisor about the training. Your supervisor is the person who must determine what you need to know to perform your assigned duties.

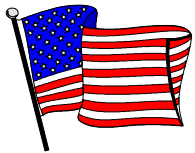
Remember, there are several different ways that you can get training courses, such as through correspondence, computer-based classes, or

even satellite broadcasts. A list of training courses being offered is posted at www.swcpoc.army.mil/Functions.shtml.

Don't wait. Look thru the training schedule and submit your training request thru your supervisor.
Have vision.
Plan today.

Open Letter from Saudi Arabia to Kansas

Like many folks unfamiliar with Kansas, I thought it was flat, so you can imagine how pleasantly surprised I was when, after traveling 30 hours from Riyadh, Saudi

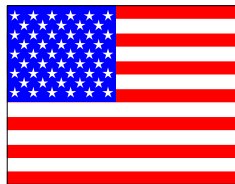


Arabia, I discovered how green and hilly this area is! Green being the operative word. The second surprise was how wonderful it smells outside, the scent of trees, grass,

freshly cut hay, and flowers have been a welcomed joy for someone who hasn't smelled them for two years.

I am here attending an Automated Personnel Processing course sponsored by SWCPOC and could not be happier with the degree of instruction and the care and consideration that has been showered upon me by the staff of SWCPOC. The level of professionalism and cooperation in this office is truly amazing. I have heard no complaints, only ideas and solutions to make the CPOC a highly efficient organization. The extent to which continued professional development is encouraged is envious and I hope to take advantage of the courses and hospitality offered by the CPOC to take additional classes in the future. In'shallah.

My husband, Norris Pettis, is the Canadian Forces Attaché' accredited to the Gulf Region (Saudi, Bahrain, Oman, Qatar, UAE, Kuwait, and also Yemen). We have been in Saudi two years and have one year left on our normal posting, but have requested an extension of two years, which if approved, will put us in the region a total of five years. We have no children in the Kingdom, but we do have two dogs, a Croatian cocker spaniel and a Saudi Desert dog (one of the wild dogs).



It is not an easy country in which to live, but if one maintains a sense of humor, it's not too bad.

The worst aspect of living in Saudi is the total lack of freedom women are forced to endure. This includes not being able to drive, not being allowed to go out of the house without an older male member of the family chaperoning her movements, not being able to eat in public with her husband except in specifically designated family sections of "some" restaurants, and having to wear an abbaya (long black robe-like garment) and veil when out in public. Saudi law mandates women wear the abbaya and most western women abide by the law, but few cover their heads.

The quality of life can be very good, though. However it is mostly what you choose to make of it. There is a lot to see and do if you are adventurous.

It has been a real pleasure being at Ft. Riley and having the opportunity to work with and learn from the staff at the SWCPOC. My stay has been all too short, but memorable. I wish to thank the staff of the SWCPOC for their assistance, friendship, and hospitality during my stay. Perhaps some of the more adventurous souls at SWCPOC will have the opportunity to visit Saudi and allow us to return the hospitality! Ma'asalamah!

Holly Pettis
Saudi Arabia

STAFFING **THE WAGON TRAIN**

Civilian Acquisition Workforce Personnel Demonstration Project

Over the last several years, the way the Government conducts business has changed fundamentally. The budget for Department of Defense (DOD) has been drastically cut. The acquisition community has taken on the challenge of reforming and modernizing itself to

perform more efficiently in this new environment.

The Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act (DAWIA) recognized the unique characteristics of the defense acquisition workforce. It issued broad guidelines for



advanced degrees, specialized training, rotation of personnel and experience, and established criteria for levels of certification and expertise.

The project will examine proposed changes in employee development, classification, and compensation for the civilian acquisition workforce and supporting personnel.

The following activities in the Southwest Region were identified to participate in the demonstration project:

- OPTEC Contracting Activity
Fort Hood, Texas
- AAESA,
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas
- AAESA/PEO Command, C3S
Fort Hood, Texas
- MEDCOM/MCAA
Fort Sam Houston, Texas
and Fort Bliss, Texas



BLAZING NEWS **OF THE TRAIL**

CPOCMA Coin Presented to SWCPOC Employee

Mr. Elmer (Smiley) Williams, Director, CPOCMA, presented a CPOCMA coin to Doris Nickson, staff member in the SWCPOC, Management Support Division.

Doris was recognized for being instrumental in maintaining a top-notch OPF filing system within Southwest Region.



**Congratulations, Doris.
We're Proud of You!**

Ft Hood Recognizes SWCPOC Employees

Three SWCPOC employees were recently recognized by Fort Hood activities (DOL and the 1st CAV Div).

Shown (left to right) are Staffing and Services Division employees: Joan Kelley, Russell Santo, and Jo Osbourn.



**Congratulations!
Good work, team!**

SURVIVING THE TRAIL **WITH MSD**

Healthy Choices & Tips

Summer Coolers

Do you know how much water you need everyday to keep your body healthy? Eight – 8 ounce glasses is partially correct.



The real answer depends on your body size, activity level and the air temperature. Fluid needs are higher during the summer.

Get the appropriate amount by starting with the minimum eight – 8 ounce glasses per day and add 1 to 3 cups per hour of activity. And remember, caffeine acts as a diuretic, so don't include them in your daily minimum fluid requirement.

LMER PARTNERS **ON THE TRAIL**

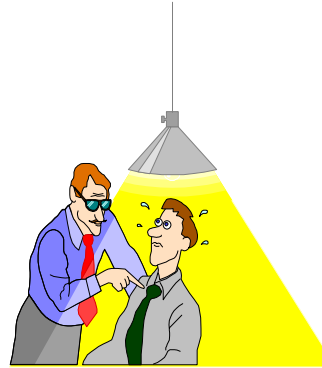
Need to Coordinate Settlement Agreements

If a Settlement Agreement is drafted which requires corrections or changes to certain personnel actions, please do not forget to coordinate with us BEFORE the agreement is finalized and signed.

REMINDER

Keep us in the loop. Send draft agreements to the SWCPOC so that we can provide input on whether we can meet the specified timeframes or on other matters which could impact on processing of the action.

We want to be part of your team! Send those draft Settlement Agreements to **Lucy Gonzalez** or **Odessa Ellis**.



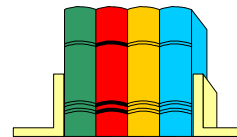
Right to Counsel During IG Interviews

The US Supreme Court ruled that bargaining unit employees who are being questioned by an agency's inspector general staff are entitled to union representation during these sessions.

Watch for FLRA guidance on this decision (NASA v. FLRA) within the next few months.

Is Your New Contract in Our CBA Library?

SWCPOC maintains a library of all the Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBA) for each of the CPACs in the Southwest Region. We need to stay current on agreement language in the contracts you have negotiated with our labor partners.



Don't forget to send a copy of new, amended or extended CBAs or other negotiated agreements to Lucy Gonzalez, Office of the Director.

Your feedback is important to us.

POC: Lucy Gonzalez, Office of the Director, DSN 856-0015, FAX 856-2393, E-mail: lucy.gonzalez@cpocswr-emh1.army.mil

